

Montana Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children
August 10, 2016 Meeting Minutes
Great Falls Public Schools District Office, Great Falls, MT

Attendance

Council Members: State Superintendent Denise Juneau, Brig. General (Ret.) Harold Stearns, Leisa Drain, Captain Daniel Bushnell, Senator Ed Buttrey, Representative Jean Price, Mark Beckman, Superintendent Tammy Lacey

OPI Staff: Madalyn Quinlan, Emilie Ritter Saunders, Billie LeDeau

Invited Guests: Principal Kim Ray (Loy Elementary, Great Falls) and Principal Brad Barringer (North Middle School, Great Falls)

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting opened with a welcome by Superintendent Denise Juneau followed by introductions of the Montana Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (MCEOMC) members and guests. Superintendent Juneau welcomed the newest members of the council (pending approval), Captain Daniel Bushnell, Montana National Guard and Leisa Drain, School Liaison Officer at Malmstrom Air Force Base.

Reports from Great Falls Public Schools

Superintendent Tammy Lacey informed the council that GFPS celebrated a full year of STARBASE. A "hands-on, minds-on" field experience in aviation science, technology, engineering, math and space exploration funded by the Department of Defense. The program has been expanded from 4th to 6th grade.

Updates from Principals Kim Ray and Brad Barringer

Principal Ray reported that 95% of Loy Elementary's students are from military families. School buses run on and off the base. Loy serves over 400 students. The biggest fluxuation of kids happens in December and May of each year. Loy has Loy Leaders who are a welcoming committee that pairs students through a buddy system. New this year is Loy Families, which has 16 kids in a group. The students get a Loy coin when they start.

The annual Veterans Day assembly at Loy is in November. Staff learn about the jobs and schedules of military parents, K-9 assembly, natural disaster briefing, etc. It's about building relationships, getting to know the parents and what they do.

Principal Ray Barringer reported that North Middle School is adding structure and accountability for their military students. They want to improve the ease of the students' transitions. The school is getting student and parent feedback to better serve their students. They display pictures of parents who are deployed on their bulletin board. Students write to family veterans to thank them for their service.

Superintendent Lacey informed the council that Loy Elementary is hosting an informational fair for military families today. The fair includes tables of information regarding lunch tickets, buses, youth center for afterschool care and they can also tour the school.

Approval of minutes

The council reviewed the minutes from last meeting. Senator Buttery asked to clarify the minutes related to his statement on Participation in the Interstate Compact to clarify that Montana does a pretty good job at standardization of processes statewide, but issues exists in process differences from state to state, which is addressed by the compact. Senator Buttrey moved to approve the minutes as amended. Superintendent Lacey seconded. Motion approved.

Approval of new council members

Senator Buttrey moved to approve the appointment of Captain Daniel Bushnell, Montana National Guard and Leisa Drain, School Liaison Officer at Malmstrom Air Force Base to the MCEOMC council. Mark Beckman seconded. Motion approved. (Staff Note: Captain Bushnell was appointed to the Council by the Governor in a letter dated March 4, 2016.)

Update on Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Superintendent Denise Juneau introduced Compact Commissioner Hal Stearns and congratulated him and his wife Shelia on receiving the Governor's Humanities award. The award ceremony will be in January.

Hal Stearns gave a report on the National Compact Commission. There have only been five interstate compacts in the past 50 years; this compact is one of the five. Every single state, and Guam and Puerto Rico, have joined the compact. The issues among states remain the same: graduation rates and different state academic requirements. Liaisons and transfer of enrollment records are key. Another issue is eligibility of athletics and the proper curriculum placement. He reported that national educational associations are on board with the compact. The Department of Defense reports that there are 86,000 military-impacted students in the United States.

Hal shared new brochures and posters that can be found on the www.MIC3.net website. Superintendent Lacey agreed to share them at the MASS/MCASE conference.

Military Children Education Coalition

Superintendent Lacey presented the www.militarychildren.org website and their available resources.

Pamphlet for Families and Students

Mark Beckman serves on the board of the National Federation of State High School Associations. He plans to bring an agenda item to the federation to provide more information to state high school associations across the country on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. It is important to reinforce Compact Rule 6.102 – Eligibility for Extracurricular Participation to

the member associations and encourage staff members from the associations to serve on or be a resource to each state's council.

Mark stated that the compact is general in addressing transition of extracurricular activities, tryouts and sporting eligibility. The OPI will work with the Montana High School Association to develop a pamphlet expressing that the MCEOMC supports the compact and the key educational transition issues encountered by military families including enrollment, placement, attendance, eligibility and graduation. The pamphlet will provide information and resources for each of these areas.

Update from Montana National Guard

Superintendent Juneau asked Captain Daniel Bushnell about his background. He is in his 30th year of military service as of March 2016. He is involved in the 30, 60 and 90-day Yellow Ribbon ceremony. The National Guard provides a youth camp day camp and kid's mobility day. The kid's mobility day has been discontinued because it was unsuccessful. Limitations include staff and location.

Superintendent Juneau discussed OPI's new Teacher Learning Hub. The Hub could be a tool to create curriculum/professional development for teachers and superintendents on issues facing military children.

Military Children and Every Student Succeeds Act

Madalyn Quinlan discussed ESSA and the military student identifier. The Office of Public Instruction is developing a new state plan that will look at more indicators than just test scores. The ESSA state plan will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education in the spring.

Report the the Legislature

The OPI reports on the MCEOMC to the Montana Legislature every two years. Madalyn will draft the report and share with the council prior to the submission of the report to the Education and Local Government Committee on September 8, 2016 at 1:00 pm.

Superintendent Juneau thanked the council for their leadership and service to military families.

Meeting adjourned.

The council members traveled to Loy Elementary to visit its Family Information Fair.